

27 November 1951

TO: [ ] FDM/Austria  
FROM: [ ] FDM/G  
SUBJECT: Activities of Johann SANITZER

1. The following is from MAVA-7817 - encl. 65 - dated 21 Sept 1950 (Source GREENGROCER 1), Title: Former GIS Officials in Touch with Communist Intelligence Service: "In this report it can be stated, through the circles that have access to factual information and many sources, that the ex-criminal prosecutor of the Gestapo, Johann SANITZER, is soon expected in Vienna. He is now working in Berlin, or in the East Zone of Germany; and is the head of a school for East German secret services. It was further discovered that SANITZER was approached by the American intelligence service during his arrest in L. G. Vienna, in order to win him over. He agreed to work but insisted on the condition that his activities would not be against Austrian citizens. The American IS did not make this concession, forcing SANITZER to decline."

2. The following is from MASA-369, 29 March 1951: 1. "Given below is a translation of USAGE report P/02761, dated 12 March 1951, Subject: Alleged Proof of Soviet Employment of Former Gestapo Chief Mueller." a. "The following report is based on a conversation between HH 1 and Dr. Wilhelm HOETTL in Linz on 9 March 1951." b. "The former Vienna Gestapo official Kriminalrat Johann SANITZER approached another former Gestapo official in Vienna through an intermediary in the National League and invited him to come to Eastern Germany where he would be given an assignment in the Volkspolizei commensurate with his former rank." c. "The Gestapo official allegedly replied that he could accept the offer only if it originated with his former chief in the Gestapo. The Gestapo official reportedly received subsequently a letter from Dresden signed by the former Gestapo officer Heinrich MUELLER." d. "The Gestapo official recognized MUELLER's signature as authentic and accepted a post in Eastern Germany." e. "SANITZER's headquarters is in Saxony but at present he is setting up a Soviet training school in Lemberg; courses specialize in defense against enemy sabotage groups and in the so-called 'Funkspiele.'"

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3. From MGSA-7060, 17 October 1950, by [ ]

1. "There is some evidence, though inconclusive, that subject may be in the employ of the DDR State Security Service. After a perusal of the attached interrogation report, I am struck by certain facets in his career which suggest why the Soviets may have taken an interest in his person: (a) He belongs to that small and very selective group of Amt IV W/T experts among whose major exploits ranks the EQUAL case. (b) He specialized in Russian cases. As you may recall, the members of the Sonderkommando Pannewitz charged with the Paris end of EQUAL were never found and must be presumed in Soviet hands." (This statement is contradicted by MGKW-7974, which states that a comparatively large number of the Sonderkommando Pannewitz were located and debriefed after the war). The remainder of this communication suggests only that an investigation should be undertaken to determine SANITZER's whereabouts.

4. WASH 17386, 17 October 1950 reported as follows: "Vienna press reported Johann SANITZER given high position DDR police. War criminal removed by Russians from Stein prison. Clever unscrupulous Gestapo official during war. Code breaking expert. Shrewd in handling captured agents. Plans rebuild organization similar to Vienna Gestapo."

5. You doubtless have all of the above information, most of which has come to the German desk through the Austrian desk. [ ] states that there has been no actual confirmation of SANITZER's work for the Soviets, nor has there been any mention in any of our DDR materials of SANITZER's name. It would seem to me, purely on the basis of the scanty reports we have, that while it is now impossible to pin down SANITZER's actual position or connection with the Soviets, the supposition that he is working for them in some capacity in East Germany is a fairly good one. The German desk has, however, drawn no conclusions in this matter; hence our judgment amounts to a mere "horseback guess."

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